

"Prevention of Infectious Diseases." By Alvah H. Doty, M. D., Health Officer of the Port of New York. D. Appleton & Co., New York. 1911.

In presenting his work on the prevention of infectious diseases, Dr. Doty has proven that many of the theories heretofore accepted are erroneous, and in fact "aid in the extension rather than the prevention of these diseases." The proofs adduced are in many instances the result of recent research in sanitary science, and are found for the first time in text-book form. Of particular value and interest is the discussion of fomites. Doty claims that the idea of disease being carried by clothing, bedding, cargoes of vessels, money, rags, etc., would long since have been shown to be a mistake, were it not for the fact that it offers an easy explanation of various epidemics, which careful and intelligent investigation might have traced to their proper source. The really important sources of infection are personal contact; mild, ambulatory, irregular and unrecognized cases; the so-called "carriers" who transmit the disease without showing any symptoms themselves; transmission through insects; and finally contamination of food and water supplies.

Following are a few of Dr. Doty's statements, differing to a greater or less extent from the older teachings: "Persons and not things transmit disease"; dirty rags and second-hand clothing do not carry disease; "cargoes of vessels do not act as mediums of infection and unless there is a specific reason for it, they should not be disturbed in instances where an infectious disease appears on board"; diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever and other diseases of this class are not disseminated by "clothing of well children in whose homes some form of infectious disease exists or has lately visited," but rather that school epidemics are due to the presence of mild or unrecognized cases, thus emphasizing the great importance of school inspection. "The real danger of transmitting infection, through the medium of the physician or nurse or others who are in charge of the case, is by the hands rather than the clothing."

Special chapters are devoted to the subjects of marine sanitation, smallpox, yellow fever, typhus fever, cholera, plague, disinfection, disinfectants, isolation of patients, the thermometer and the mosquito. Under the discussion of yellow fever a full account is given of the commission appointed by the President of the United States in 1900, to study that disease in Cuba, and of the history-making results attained by Drs. Reed, Carroll, Agrimonte, Lazear and their associates.

In the study of plague problems Doty believes the infected rat the chief cause of the spread of disease, still he believes it is and has been accepted to the exclusion of other extremely possible modes of transmission.

"The Prevention of Infectious Diseases" is a book of great practical value to the health and quarantine officer, and of interest to the medical profession at large.

L. D. M.

Dyspepsia, Varieties and Treatment. By M. Solton Fenwick, M. D. Published by W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia. 1910.

Any book which is the "outcome of the experience gained by the personal examination and treatment of more than 18,000 patients" deserves looking into, especially when the subject is one of great interest to every physician.

The preface begins well by pointing out that there is an almost universal disposition to regard indigestion as gastric in origin when in a large proportion of cases, the intestines and other organs are at fault; also that the gastro-intestinal tract is too closely interrelated physiologically to allow of a disturbance in only one short section. He warns us against the common mistake of considering gastrectasis and gastroptosis as isolated pri-

mary conditions, and in various ways shows the necessity of studying the abdominal organs as a whole.

Unfortunately, the book itself abounds in inconsistencies which appear to be the result of an attempt to fit the author's ripe experience into a scheme which he says he drew up over sixteen years ago. For example, although he says it is extremely doubtful whether persistent hyperacidity ever exists independently of hypersecretion, and that he believes the latter to be due always to organic disease, yet he writes two separate articles in which there are schemes for differentiating the two. Again, at the end of a long discourse on the treatment of hypersecretion he says he cannot recall one out of 1000 cases who has recovered without operation, yet in the treatment of hyperacidity, operations are not mentioned. It is also surprising that a book which can devote twenty-eight pages to the discussion of dyspepsia due to the presence of animals in the stomach should make but cursory reference to ulcer and carcinoma.

The advocates of early diagnosis of cancer will be startled to hear that "The coexistence of enlargement of the liver, nodules in the skin of the abdomen or fluid in the peritoneal or pleural cavities all bespeak the probability of a malignant growth."

If his descriptions of "Myasthenia gastrica," "Gastric hyperesthesia," "Gastric neurasthenia" and gastroptosis could only be worked into one picture, as he frequently hints that they should be, he could dispense with the forced differential diagnoses and needless repetitions on treatment, and instead of more confusion, a great light could be thrown upon these common conditions. He recognizes in all of them the same etiology, the same heredity, the effect of wasting diseases, rapid reduction and fatigue; he notes the association with mucous colitis and general enteroptosis, and states that the large intestine always shares in the asthenic condition of the stomach.

Although the importance of intestinal indigestion is spoken of in the preface, it receives very inadequate discussion and the examination of stools is not sufficiently encouraged. In fact all the laboratory aids to diagnosis, such as the occult blood test, etc., are slighted, and the X-Ray is hardly mentioned.

The sections on treatment are generally very good and sane though the dietetic instructions might be a little more detailed.

If the author would only break away from his needless classification and rewrite his book from the standpoint of his preface, his wide knowledge of the subject, keen observation and able therapeutics would make a remarkably good monograph a third the size of the present volume. As it is, it will amply repay those who would seek out the author's experience on various points and his methods of treatment.

W. C. A.

Diseases of the Skin. By Henry W. Stelwagon, M. D., Ph. D. Sixth Edition, revised. Published by W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia and London, 1910.

This book is deservedly considered one of the best text books on dermatology and in its new (sixth) edition is brought well up to date. Due consideration is given various subjects that have been prominent recently, as for example, pellagra, sporotrichosis, grain-mite, dermatitis, brown-tail moth dermatitis, various tropical skin diseases, granuloma annulare, lichen nitidus, etc. The book is very well illustrated and many new plates of special value have been added. The etiology and pathology of the various dermatoses are briefly but clearly described and special attention is paid to diagnosis and treatment. This latter feature is of particular value to the practitioner.

H. E. A.